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Testimony for the House Transportation Committee on HB5198 and HB5199

Madam Chairman and committee members, thanks for the opportunity to explain my strong opposition to these bills on behalf of the National Motorists Association and myself.

First, furnishing alcohol to minors by either commercial establishments in public settings, or by private citizens in private settings like parties, are already illegal acts – and they should be illegal acts. There are already significant sanctions in law to appropriately punish these violations, sanctions that relate directly to the illegal nature of the offenses.

Second, the National Motorists Association believes that sanctions against a person's driver's license should be exclusively for driving infractions committed by that person which indicate they are unable or unwilling to follow the rules of the road designed for everyone's driving safety. This is the statement on our website www.motorists.org/other/

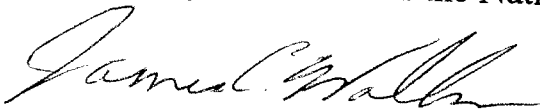
"The National Motorists Association has long held that the driver license should serve one and only one purpose; that is to certify that the owner of that license has proven that he or she is capable of operating a motor vehicle, on a public roadway, and in a safe and prudent manner. We do not believe that the driver license should be suspended or revoked unless, through due process, it is proven that the license owner is not driving in a safe and prudent manner."

Third, these bills, like the Drivers Responsibility Act, will add still more unlicensed and uninsured drivers to our roads. Many of the people who will have licenses suspended by HB5198 and 5199 will still have to drive to keep their jobs, despite the risks involved. They will become added victims to the DRA law and increase the already large number of drivers (likely over 100,000 now) who are forced to choose between driving unlicensed, or losing their ability to work to support their families. Many of them will continue to drive illegally.

Fourth, is it appropriate for states to pass laws assisting the public relations programs of private companies like liquor distributors? The company Diageo supports legislation like this to enhance their reputation in selling a product which can be abused with negative consequences to society. If Camel cigarettes asked for laws to suspend the driver's license of a person giving cigarettes to a minor, would the legislature oblige them? I think not.

Please do not vote these bills out of committee. I will be happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully submitted for the National Motorists Association and myself,



James C. Walker